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AMBULATOR FOR PARAPLEGICS: ENGINEERING DRAWINGS

> RA Garrett J Weir

Final Report: 17 June - 1 November 1978

Prepared for Veterans Administration Prosthetics Center

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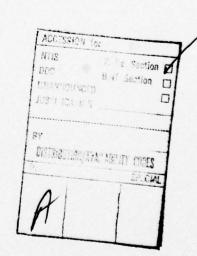
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DISCUSSION

The ambulator discussed in this report is one part of a three-phase plan to develop an integrated transportation system for paraplegics. The development of the system is sponsored by the Veterans Administration Prosthetics Center (VAPC) and is being developed as a cooperative effort between the VAPC and the Naval Ocean Systems Center (NOSC).

Phase I consisted of the design and fabrication of a prototype ambulator (the drawings for this device are contained in the remainder of this report). Phase II is the design of a wheelchair which will accept the ambulator, forming the ambulator/wheelchair subsystem. Phase III will be concerned with the design of a street vehicle that will functionally accommodate the integrated ambulator/wheelchair subsystem.

The ambulator/wheelchair subsystem consists of two modules which can be separated to provide increased mobility for the paraplegic while supported in the upright position. The ambulator (figure 1) contains an erecting mechanism powered by an electric motor-driven jackscrew fixed to a small, stable platform. This provides the paraplegic with the capability to be raised into a fully erect position, and it also allows the ambulator to be detached from the wheelchair's mainframe. The occupant can then move away from the wheelchair and move about under his control.

The ambulator is self-powered and provides the user with a high degree of maneuverability. When returning to the wheelchair, an engagement mechanism on either side of the ambulator engages rollers on the wheelchair. This causes the wheelchair to return to the sitting position and raises the ambulator base several inches off the floor. The ambulator is then automatically reattached to the wheelchair's mainframe and becomes an integral part of the main wheelchair assembly.

In addition to providing the paraplegic with the capability to stand or sit at will, it is felt that the ambulator will provide the paraplegic with better general health. It will allow him to load his skeleton periodically, providing the bone stress needed to reduce calcium washout. (The latter condition can result in loss of calcium, especially in the bones of the legs and pelvic region). Standing will also improve circulation and relieve those pressure areas which cause tissue breakdown and decubiti. The ambulator will also make it easier for the paraplegic to live in an environment where most functions are accomplished in an upright position, e.g., cooking at a range or working at a workbench or sink. However, the psychological benefit of the capability to converse at eye level may be the greatest benefit.

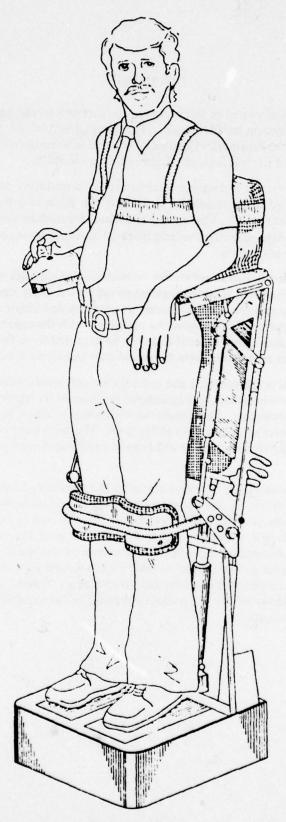
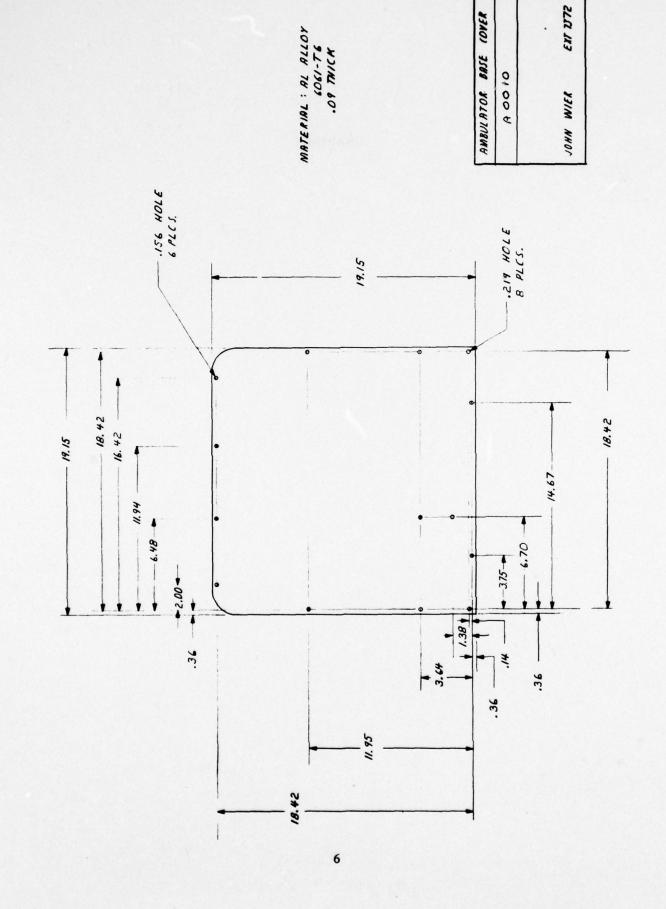
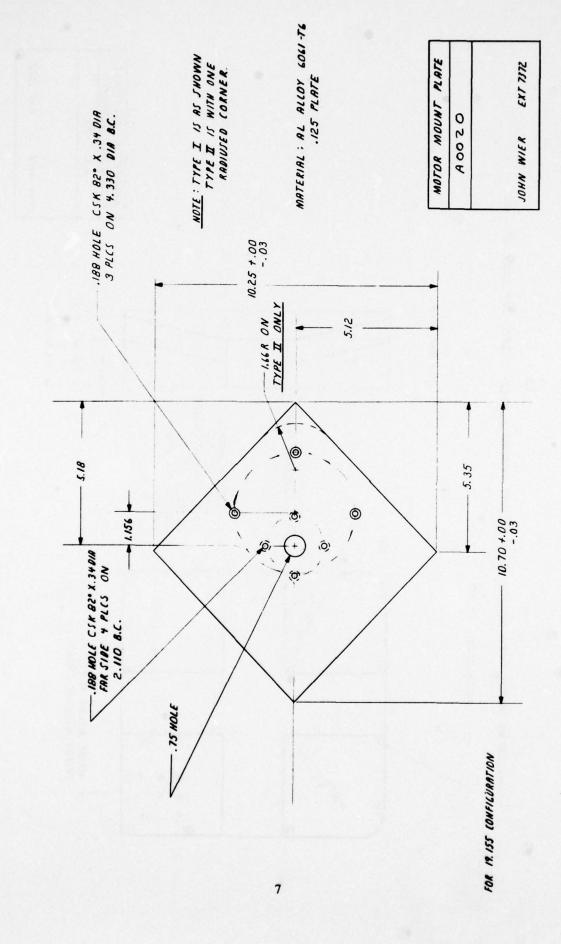
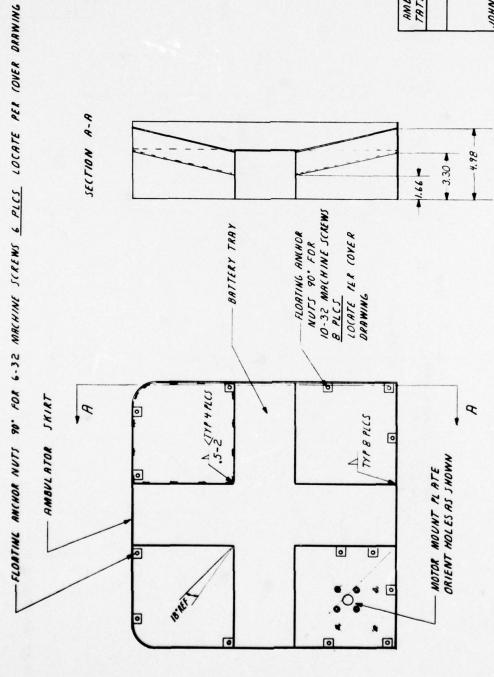


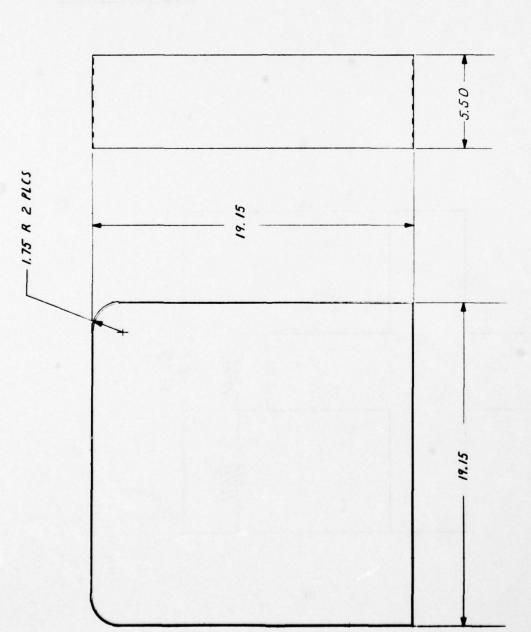
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DRAWINGS





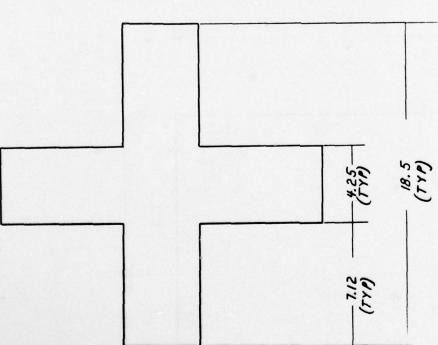




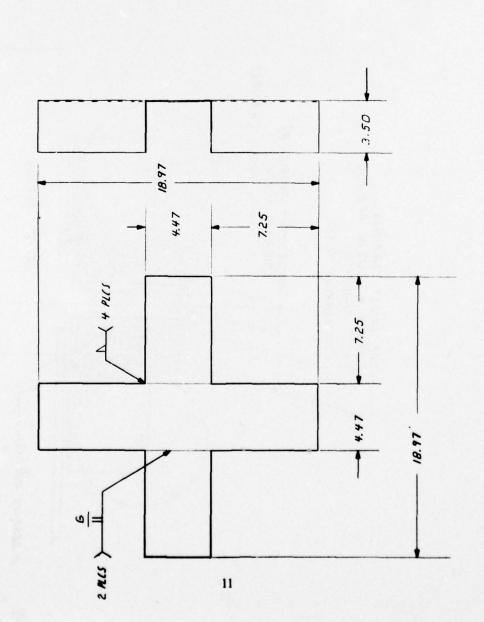
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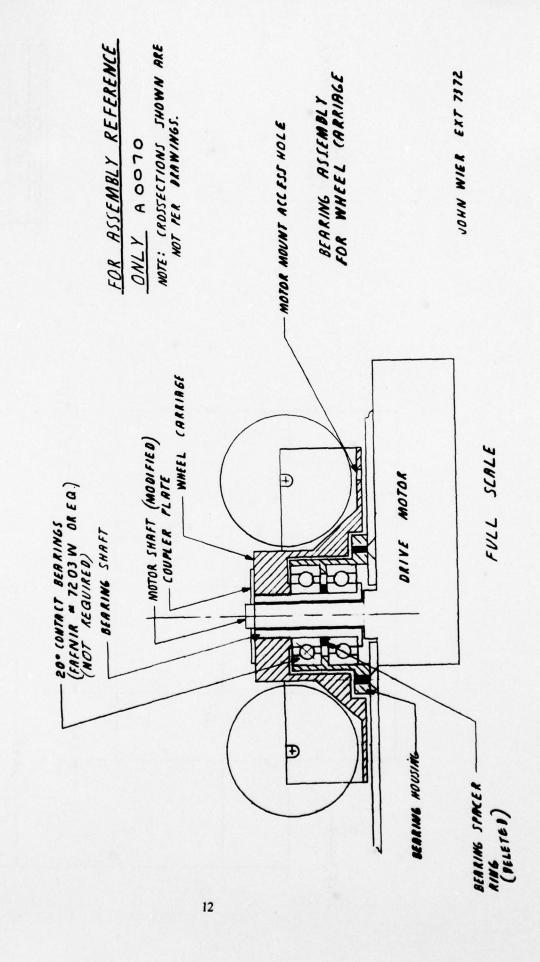


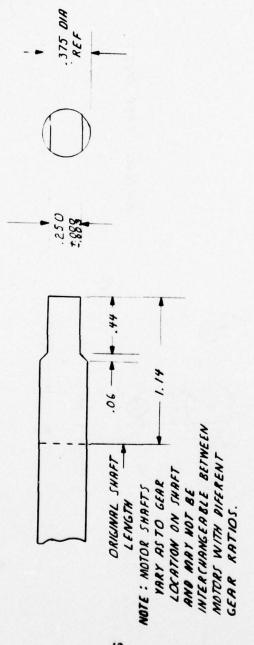
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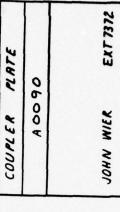
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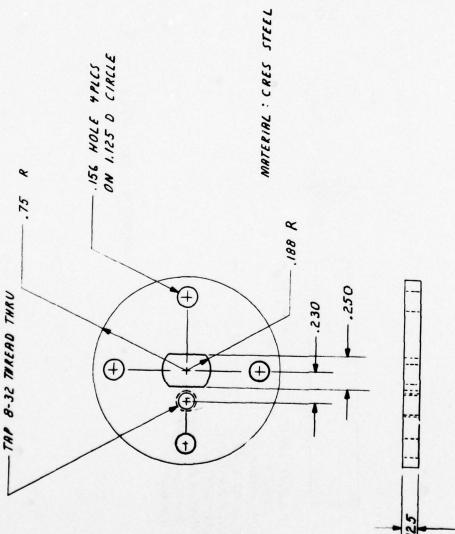


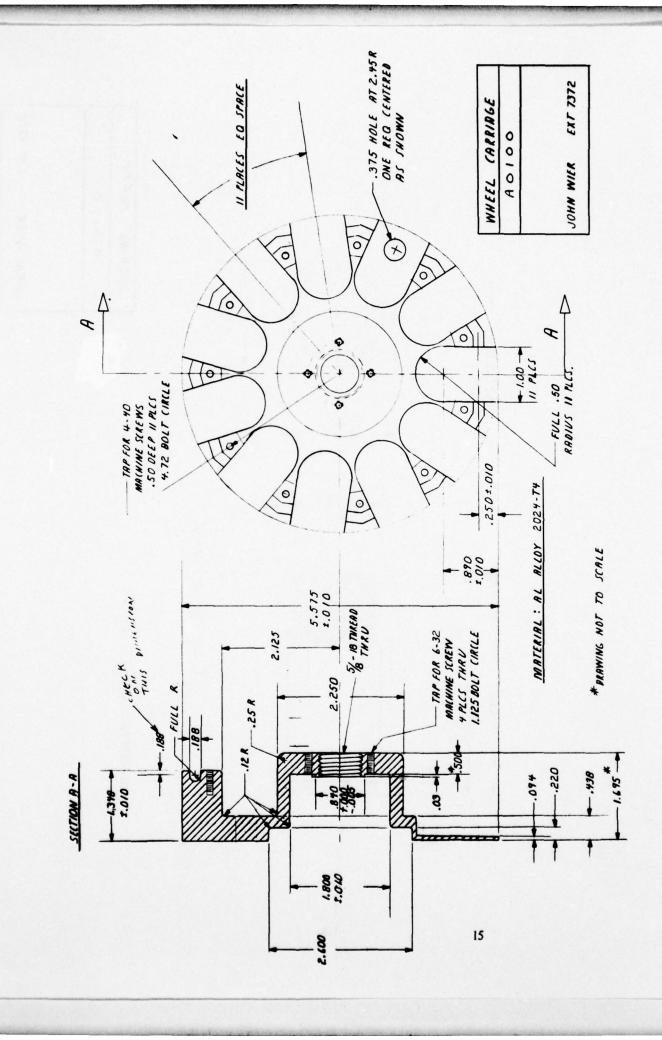


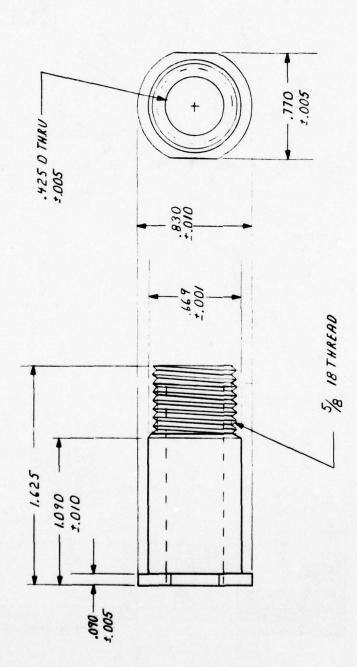
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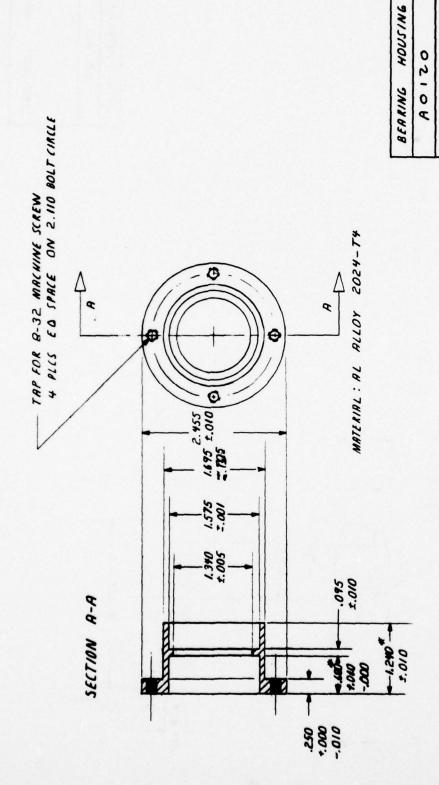






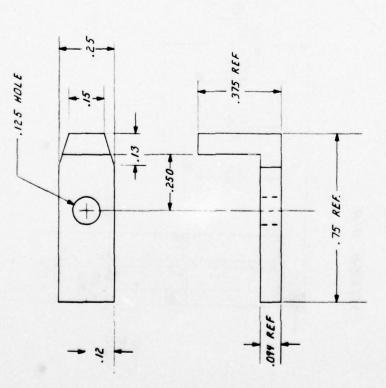
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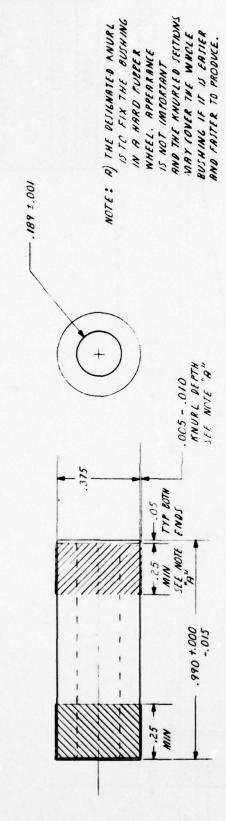


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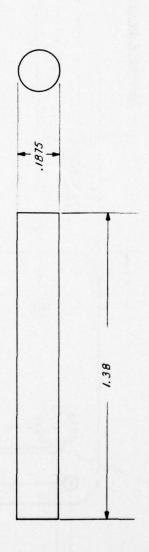
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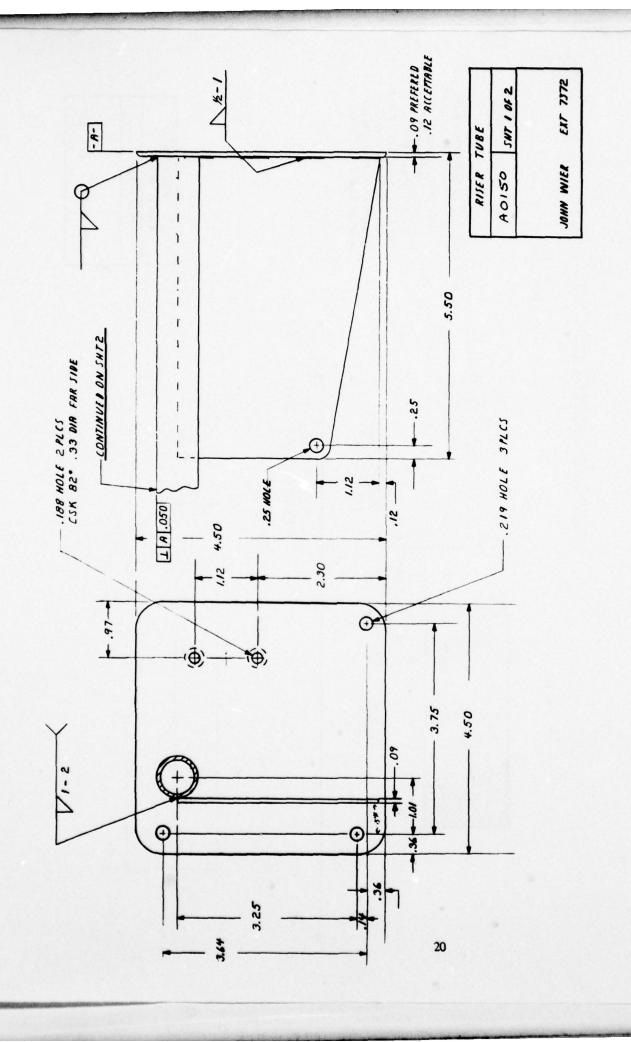


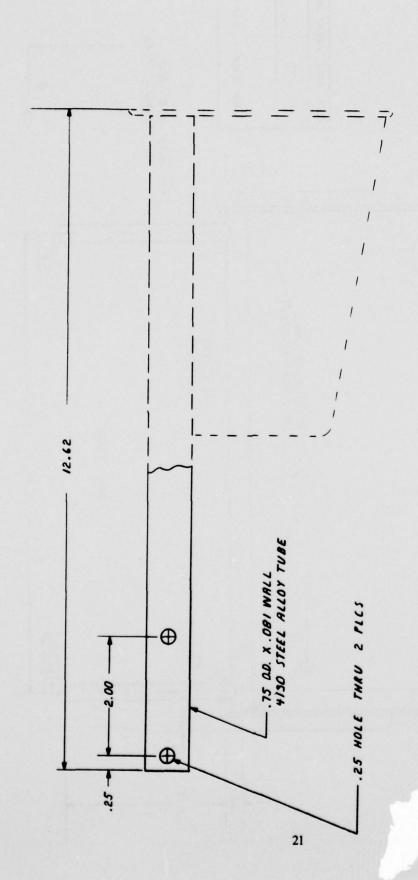




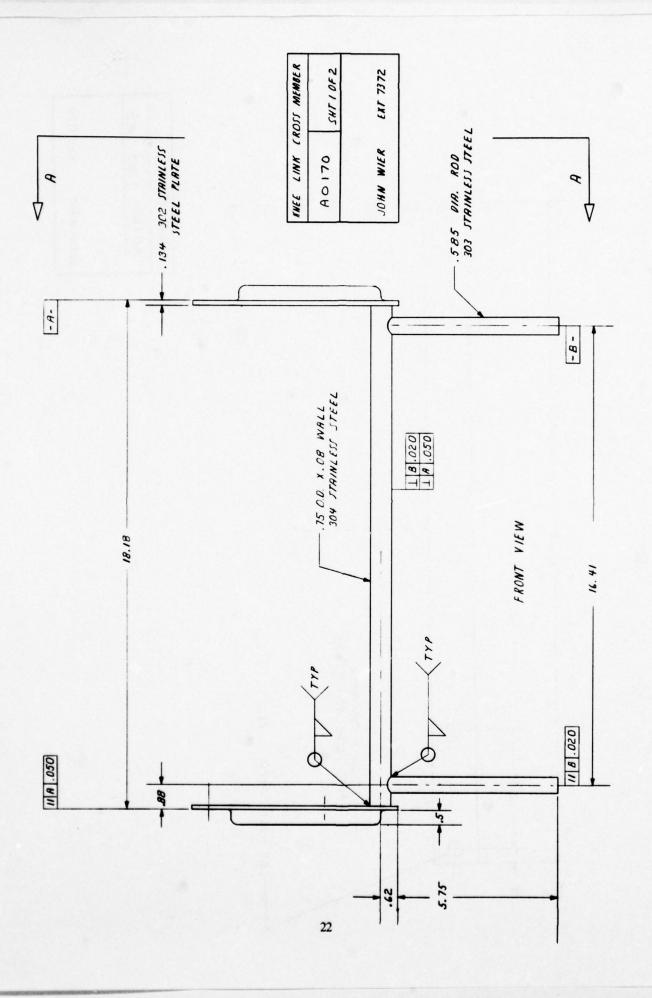
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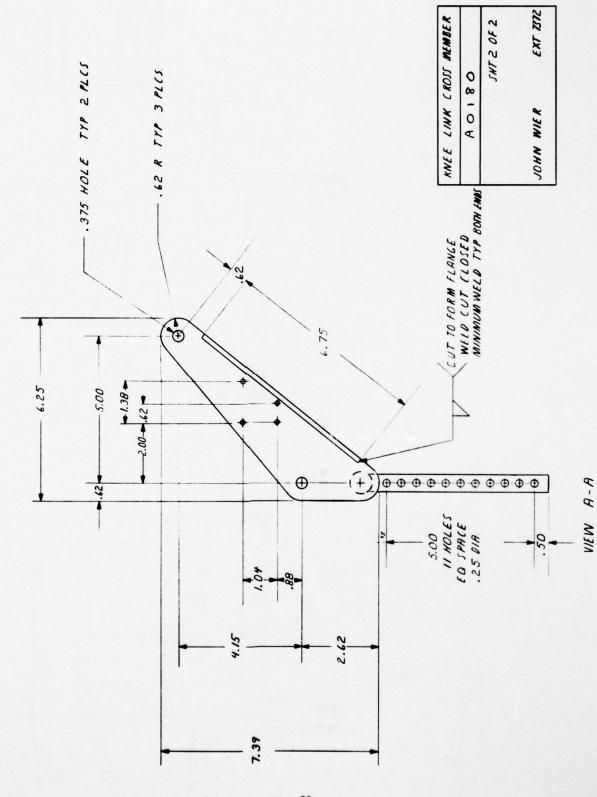


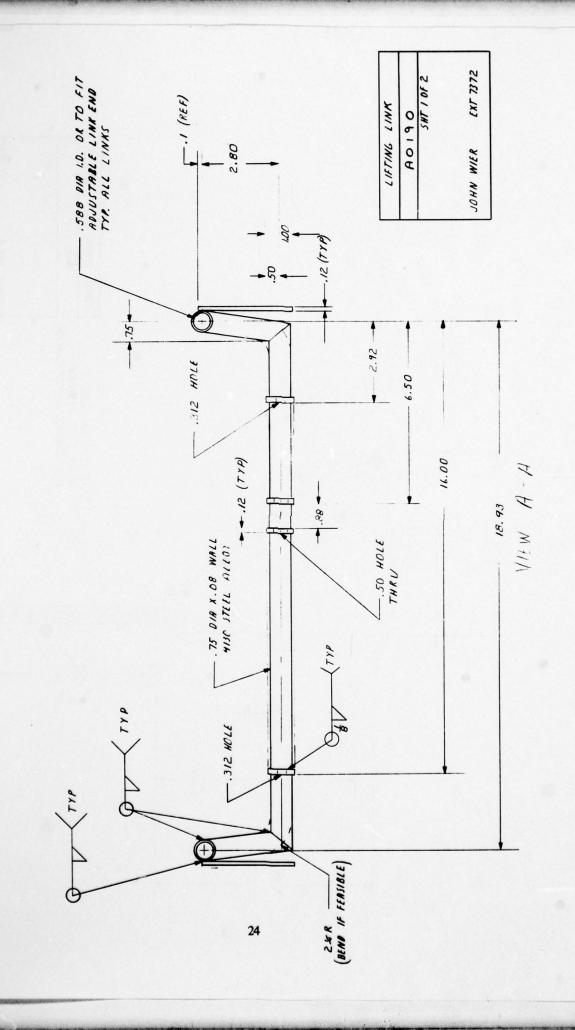


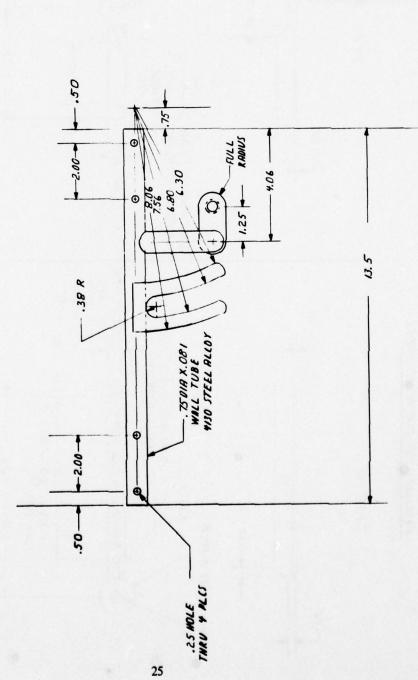


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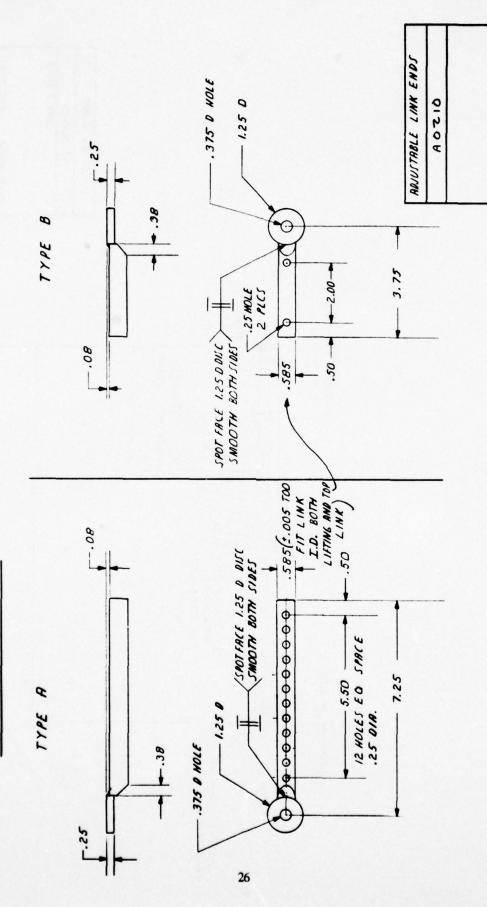








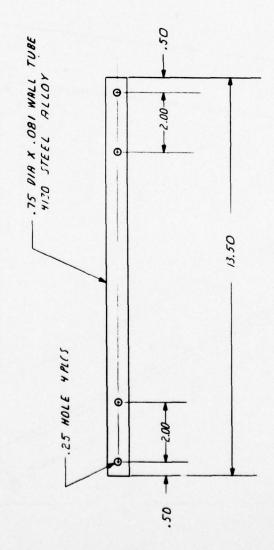
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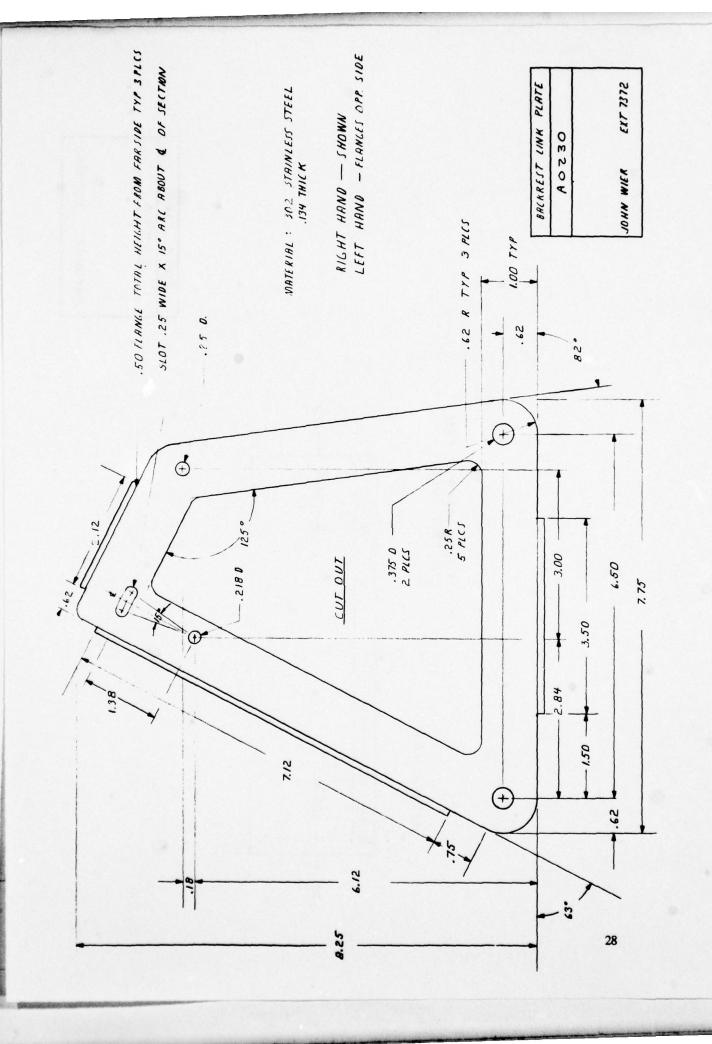


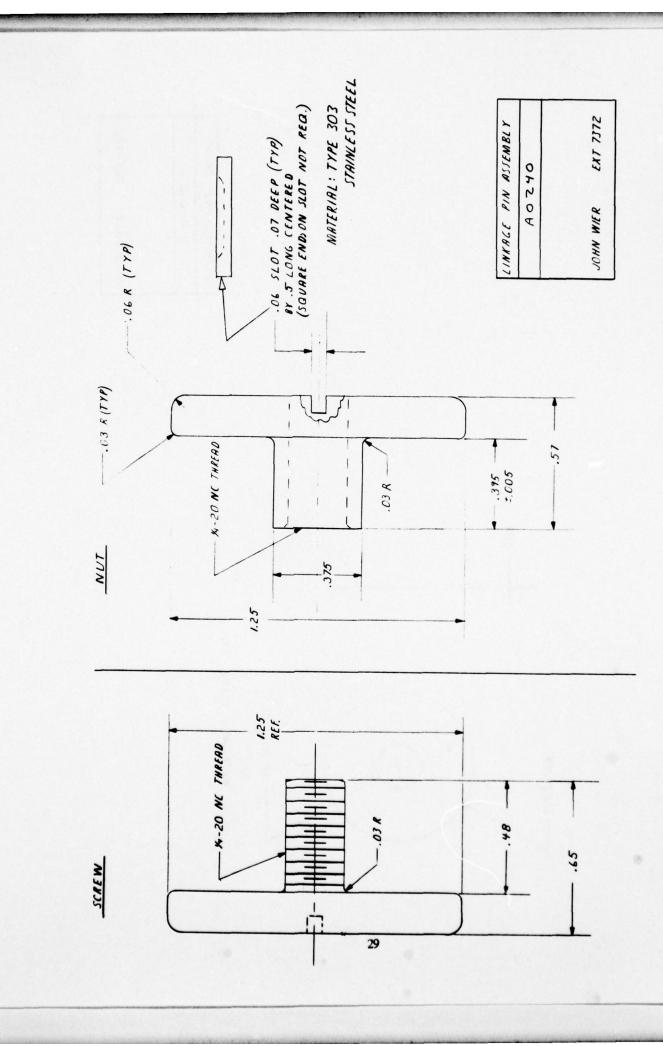
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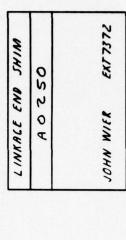
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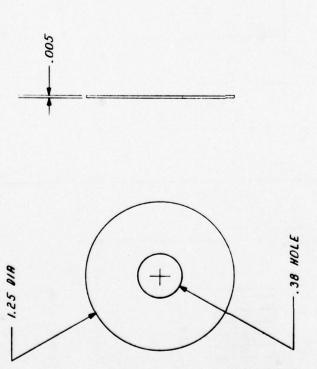
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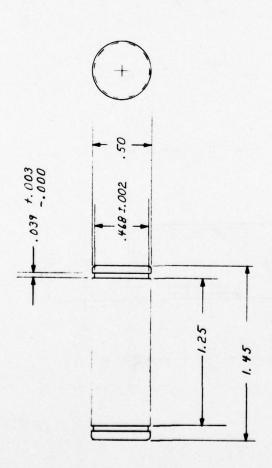




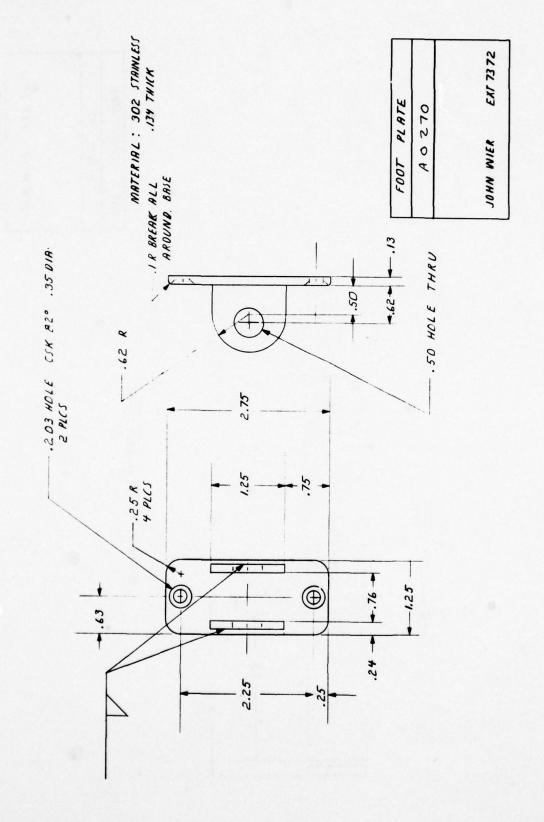


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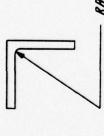
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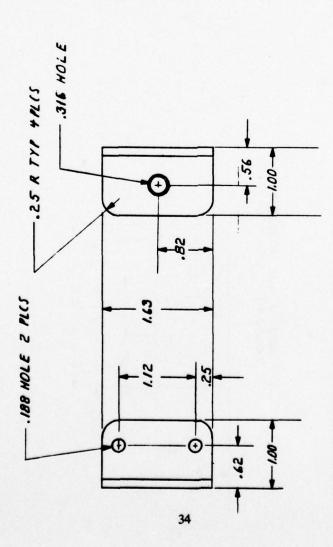
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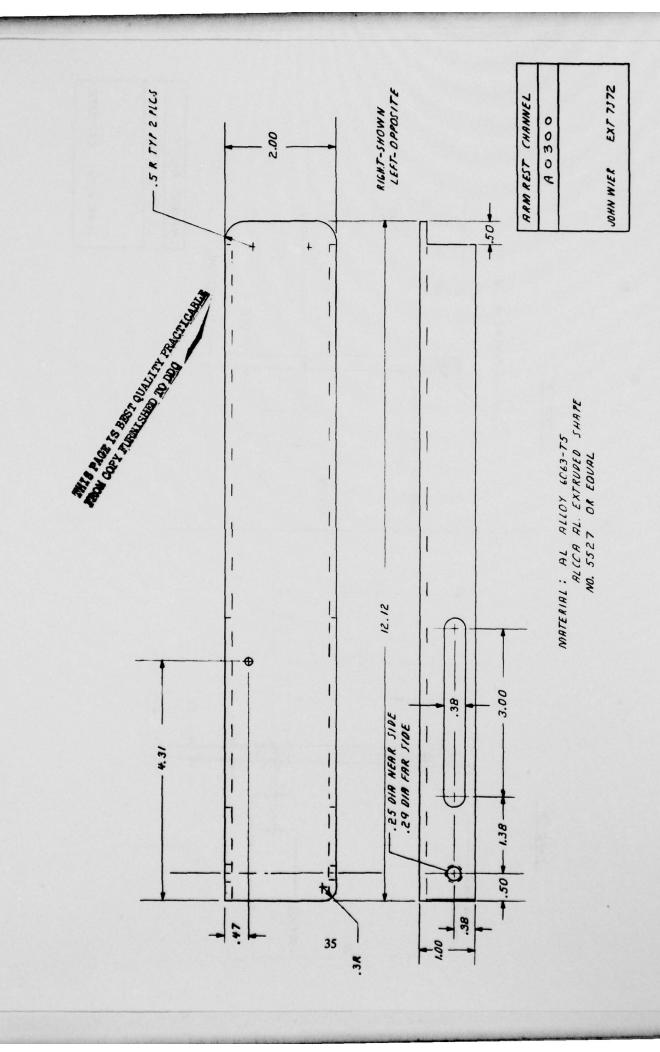
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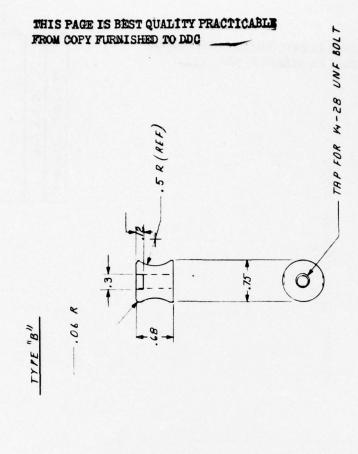
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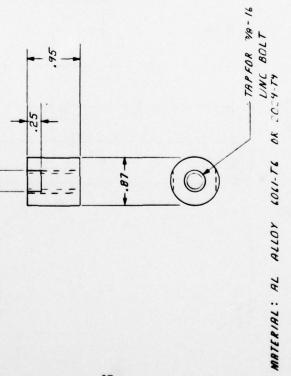


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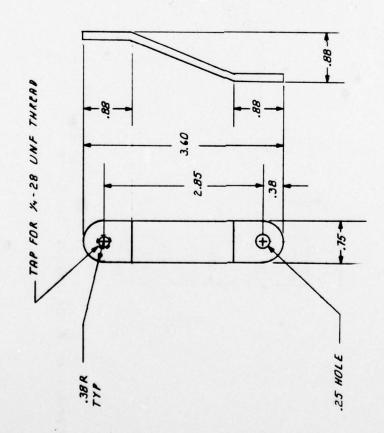
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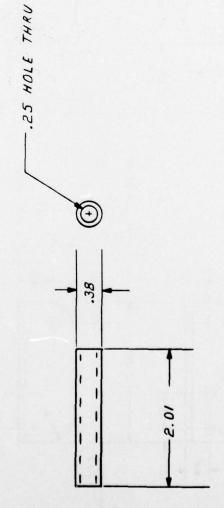
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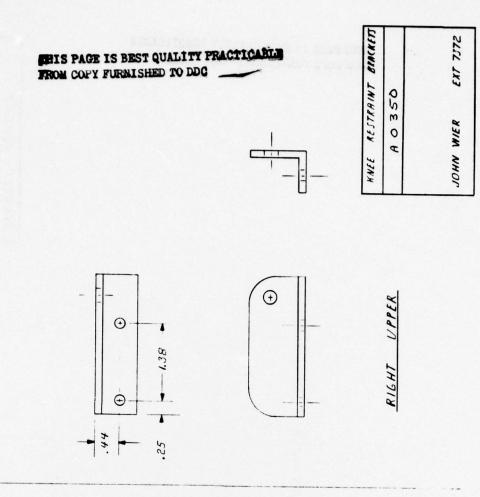


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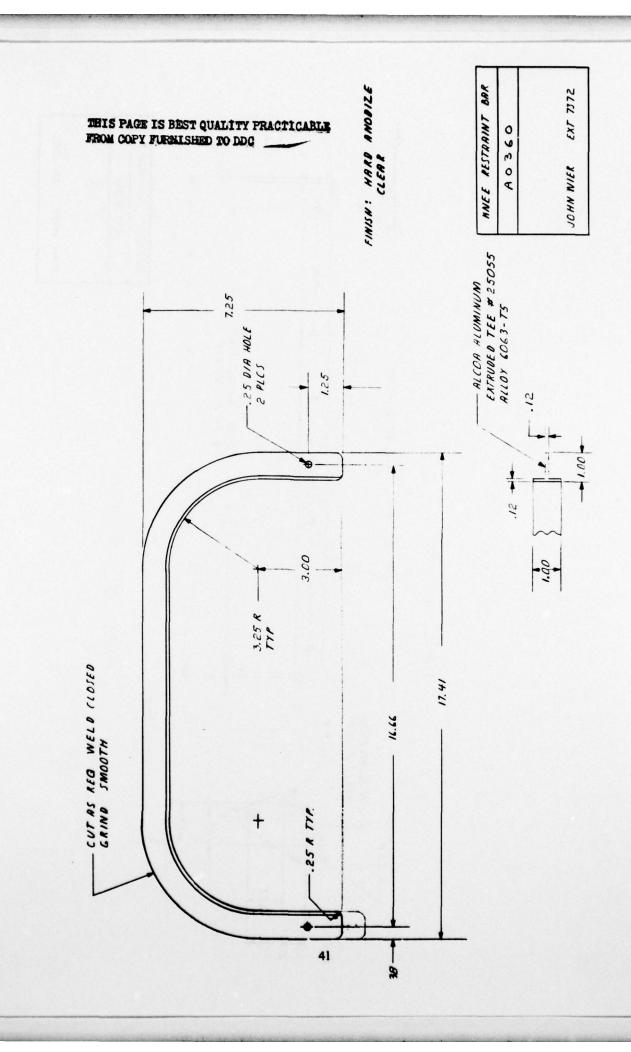
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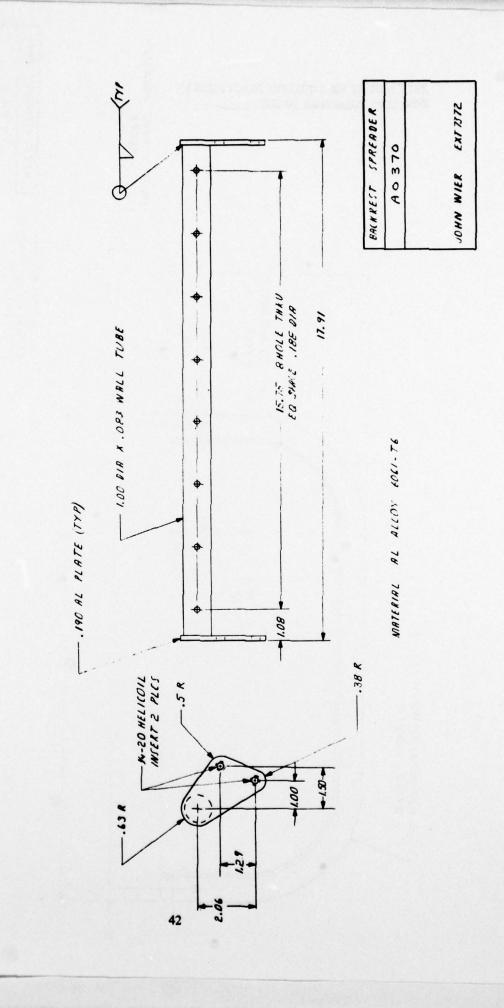


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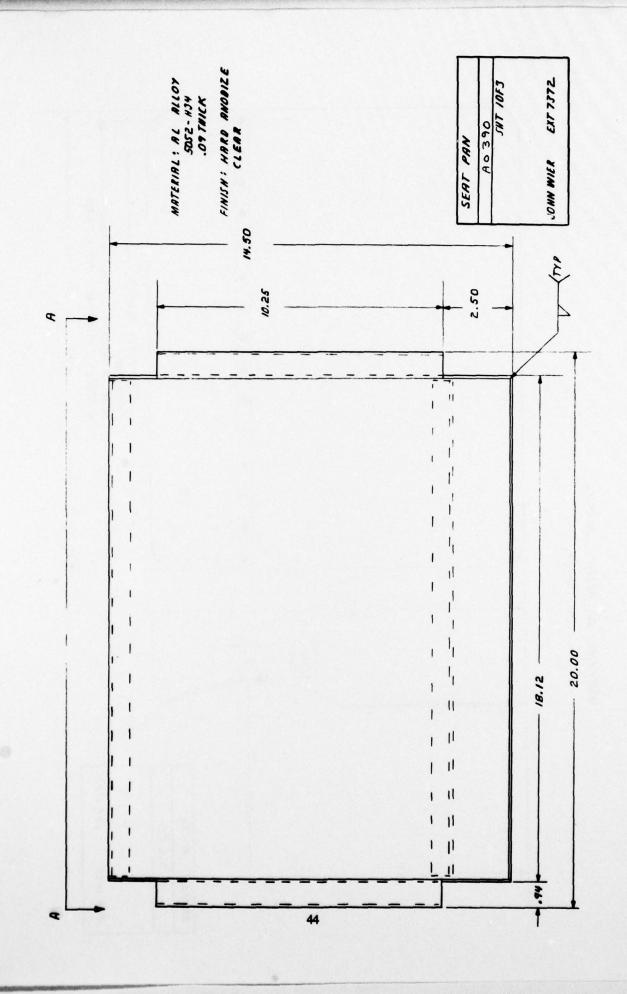
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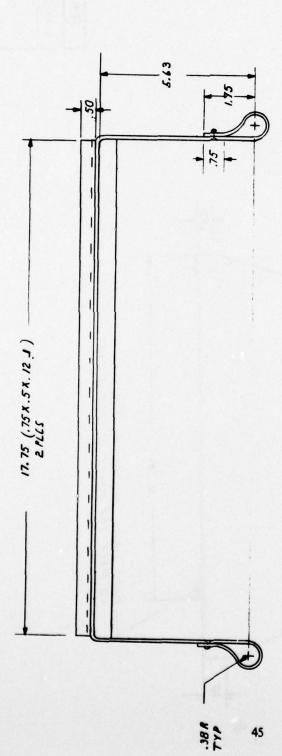




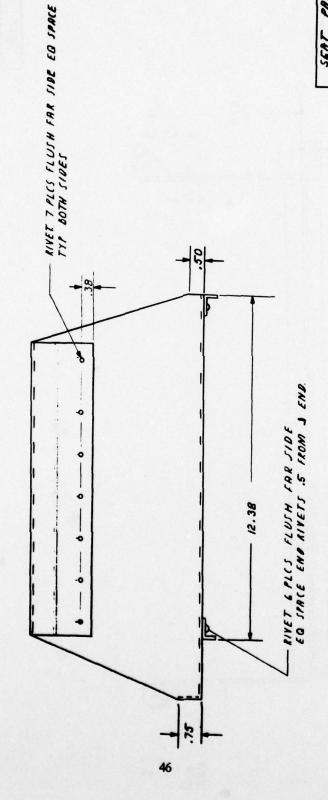
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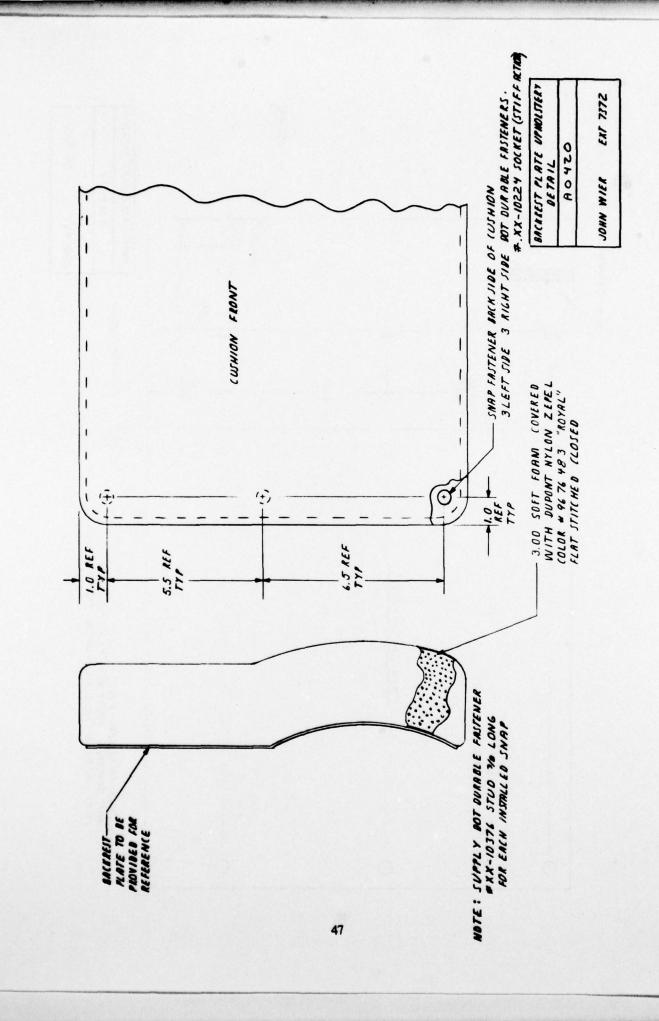


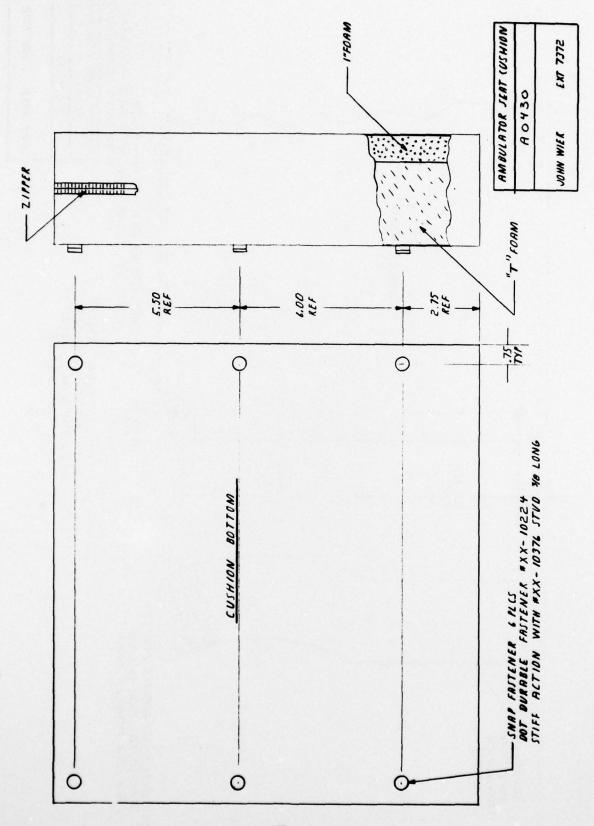


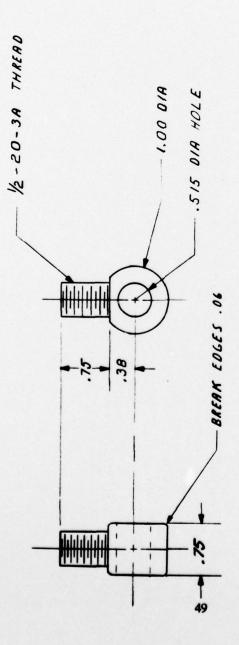
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